

**Method for Controlling Group Membership
in a Distributed Multinode Data Processing System
to Assure Mutually Symmetric Liveness Status Indications**

Abstract of the Disclosure

5 In distributed multinode data processing systems, mechanisms are employed to insure that
the nodes are continually informed about the liveness of the other nodes within node groups in
the network and across networks. The method of the present invention employs the concept of
node stability which it uses to provide indications of membership in a previous stable group as
part of messages transmitted in a protocol for forming, maintaining and dissolving node
10 groupings in such a way as to assure that all of the nodes in the group have a consistent
indication of liveness status for all of the nodes within any given group of nodes.